



# Department of Justice

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## **BOGUS LANDLORD PLEADS GUILTY TO STEALING FEDERAL RENT SUBSIDIES**

Tampa, FL - United States Attorney Robert E. O'Neill today announced Brian Montgomery, a 37 year old resident of Tampa, pleaded guilty to theft of government funds. The maximum penalty Brian Montgomery faces is ten years' imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, three (3) years of supervised release, and a special assessment of \$100.

Montgomery was charged last month in an indictment alleging that he and four other individuals were engaged in a conspiracy to steal federal rent subsidy payments from the Tampa Housing Authority. According to the statement of facts in his plea agreement, Montgomery operated as a bogus landlord in the Tampa Housing Authority's Housing Choice Voucher/Section 8 program from June 2004 to January 2005. The Tampa Housing Authority ("THA") is contracted by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development to administer the Housing Choice Voucher program, which provides financial assistance to aid low income families in obtaining a decent place to live. Montgomery admitted that he received nine fraudulent rental subsidy payments totaling \$42,480.00, including a check issued in October 2004 for \$10,106.00. He shared the proceeds of the scheme with a co-defendant who was formerly employed by the Tampa Housing Authority ("THA").

Montgomery is one of thirteen individuals charged in December 2007 with theft of federal housing subsidy payments through the bogus landlord scheme. According to the indictments and information filed last month, three former employees of the Tampa Housing Authority recruited friends and family members to act as bogus landlords in order to cause fraudulent rent subsidy payments to be issued to them. Montgomery is the second individual charged in the scheme to plead guilty. On January 11, 2008, a former THA employee, Mario Lovett, pleaded guilty to conspiring to steal government funds by recruiting eight individuals to act as bogus landlords in 2004 and 2005.

The case was investigated by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Cherie L. Krigsman.